

# Safety Simply Stated

# **Message from City Safety Officer, Michael Alio**

This is a story about people who changed their work life in dramatic and simple ways. It didn't happen by luck or chance and these people are little different from you and me. This story is being repeated in different ways in dozens of companies across this country.

What these employees did and are continuing to do is improve safety performance by actively influencing both the behaviors and attitudes of co-workers. Safety clearly is not the only beneficiary. These employees also affected union-management relations, workplace morale, employee self-esteem, and team cohesiveness in exciting and rewarding ways.

The story begins with a small group of employees with a particular interest in safety. Some were already involved in a site-wide safety committee for their chemical processing plant. Others were informal leaders in their work groups. The plant safety committee's focus was on the equipment side of safety but they recognized there was more they could do. They looked for and secured some help to make a broader impact on safety through a behavior-based and personbased approach.

The essence of their process for "Steering Toward an Injury-Free Workplace" is employee involvement in identifying and solving safety concerns. These concerns focus on behavior or the way employees perform their jobs but also encompasses equipment, training, and procedures. For example, the list of outcomes work groups credit to their observation-based problem solving process involves behavior changes, new

training, greater responsiveness, and more accurate procedures.

## SAMPLE OBSERVATION PROCESS OUTCOMES

- ⇒ "Fork truck operators regularly use horns at intersections"
- "Co-workers bring it to your attention if you are working at-risk"
- ⇒ "Changes in the lock-out/tagout procedure implemented"
- ⇒ "Faster responses to safety work orders"

Each work group is charged with selecting their targeted behaviors for observation, determining their own interventions, and choosing their own means of recognizing and rewarding group members. Some groups narrowly focused their attention on specific observations of chlorine bottle changing, lock out, or fork truck operation. Other groups concentrated on types of behavior including personal protective equipment use or housekeeping.

The key is each group making its own decisions with the guidance of a representative from the Behavioral Leadership Team. After each round of observations, the groups work through a problem solving process to improve the behaviors targeted. Observations are voluntary but strongly encouraged. In two years, the facility has achieved 85%

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## Special points of interest:

- 4th of July Tips
- Articles from 2 department Safety Officers
- Safety Training Calendar
- Ergonomic Quiz

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## A Holiday Warning—Sirens have a Purpose By: Tristina Meche, Safety Assistant

he Fourth of July holiday is often accompanied by the sounds of emergency sirens. Drivers have been known to react in a variety of ways when they hear a siren—they race the emergency vehicle to the next intersection or exit; they shadow the emergency vehicle to the accident or crime scene; they use the emergency vehicle as a temporary personal escort. All of these acts are unsafe and illegal!

California Vehicle Code Section 21806 clearly states that:

"Upon the immediate approach of an authorized emergency vehicle which is sounding a siren and which has at least one lighted lamp exhibiting red light that is visible, under normal atmospheric conditions, from a distance of 1,000 feet to the front of the vehicle, the surrounding traffic shall, except as otherwise directed by a traffic officer, do the following:

- (a) (1) Except as required under paragraph (2), the driver of every other vehicle shall yield the right-of-way and shall immediately drive to the right-hand edge or curb of the highway, clear of any intersection, and thereupon shall stop and remain stopped until the authorized emergency vehicle has passed.
  - (2) A person driving a vehicle in an exclusive or preferential use lane shall exit that lane immediately upon determining that the exit can be accomplished with reasonable safety.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, traffic accidents kill more firefighters than fires. For example, in 2003, 37 firefighters died while responding to or returning from emergencies.



while 29 died at the scene of fires. This suggests vehicles pose a

greater hazard than flames.

When you hear an emergency vehicle while driving, do not panic, pull over to the right side of the road as quickly and safely as possible until the emergency vehicle passes. Sharing the road with a emergency vehicle should not be dangerous for your or the responders.

here's never been a better time than the Fourth of July to show your patriotism. And there's never been a more important time to celebrate responsibly—especially when it comes to using fireworks. So, remember these safety tips, when it comes to buying, using, or enjoying your fireworks:

- Always buy from an established retail outlet.
- Never make your own fireworks, and be on the lookout for teens experimenting with home made fireworks.
- Always read and follow the directions on the label.

## 4th of July Celebrations By: May Jong, Training Coordinator

- Only use fireworks outdoors.
- Keep a bucket of water handy.
- The person shooting the fireworks should wear eye protection—and never have any part of their body over a firework.
- Light only one firework at a time—and never re-light a "dud" firework.
- Never shoot fireworks in metal or glass containers—and don't even think about carry them in your pocket!
- Dispose of fireworks properly when you're done—soak them in water before putting them in the trash can.

- Have a responsible adult in charge.
- Never give fireworks to children.

REMINDER: Fire works are illegal in the City of Long Beach. Check with your city ordinances before adding fire works to your 4th of July celebration.



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## Training Methodology, Materials and Media

By: Jerry Wolfe, Department Safety Officer

iven a few exceptions, OSHA does not specify the manner in which training is to be performed. The methodologies used for training are left to the employer's discretion. There is not a specific regulation, that can be cited stating, you must use videos, PowerPoint, teleconference, handouts, etc. While OSHA does specify content at times and content type at all times, it always demands effectiveness. The true test of a training methodology is how well the information is used by the employee and how much of it is retained, and how well is it reinforced. A training class is just the beginning of the road to mere compliance. An employer is required to ensure that the overall Occupational Health and Safety Program is effective. The training provisions of most standards are stated in performance language, allowing the employer flexibility in complying with the requirement for training. The responsibility of providing adequate training and evaluating the employee's proficiency rests with the employer. OSHA requires the development and maintenance of employee proficiency. Furthermore, OSHA places a continuing obligation on the employer to evaluate the capability of each employee and assure that the employee maintains competence at their work. Remember, an effective, well established health and safety program is not a list of training topics. OSHA does place a great deal of emphasis on training because it is easily measurable, (completed and documented). Cal/OSHA regulations only establish minimum standard for the workplace, (a minimum standard equates to a 70% effort). Cal/OSHA recognizes the limited utility of a safety program that decides to be minimally compliant, "Compliance with these orders may not in itself prevent occupational injuries or diseases, but will, it is believed, provide a safe environment which is a fundamental prerequisite in controlling injuries".

#### **OSHA Required Content:**

OSHA does require the following to be included as part of any training program:

- Specific content required by the regulation.
- 2. Manufacturer's recommendations (as applicable)
- 3. Manufacturer's operations, service, and maintenance manuals (as applicable)
- 4. Content of employers written program, practices, and policies.
- 5. Specific hazards related to a process, operation, vehicle, machinery, equipment, etc.
- 6. Evaluation of employee's ability to understand and perform there assigned tasks.
- 7. Employee access to a qualified trainer to explain technical material and employer specific requirements.

#### **Common OSHA Questions**

In order to determine the effectiveness of the overall an OSHA Compliance Officer will ask a series of probing "Basic Response Questions", starting with the <u>training element</u>. They will ask questions such as:

- 1. Who conducted the training?
- 2. What information was covered?
- 3. How long have you been performing this task?
- 4. How often/frequently do you perform this task?
- 5. Do you know the contents of the written programs (IIPP, Lockout/Tagout, etc.) Where can you find a copy of the program?
- 6. How do you report hazardous conditions?
- 7. Various open-ended questions designed to find out how the employee was trained, content of the training, and how well the material has been implemented.

Unless noted otherwise, just about any method (e.g. videos, handouts, PowerPoint, instructor, etc.) can be used to

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## **West Nile Virus**

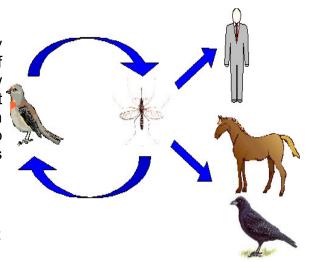
By: Laurie Browning, Department Safety Officer

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a mosquito-borne virus that has been found in parts of Asia, eastern Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. The virus was first detected in the United States (U.S.) in 1999 in New York City.

The majority of people and animals that are infected with the virus have a mild illness or no symptoms. In rare cases, the virus can cause a more serious condition called encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain. The elderly are at a higher risk for disease caused by WNV. At the end of 2001, a total of 28 states had reported WNV activity. The virus has moved further westward, bringing the total to 44 states. California has reported one human case (Los Angeles) and the state of Washington recently listed a WNV positive raven.

WNV is transmitted to people and animals by infected mosquitoes. Only certain species of mosquitoes carry the virus and very few mosquitoes are actually infective. A mosquito first acquires the infection by feeding on a bird with virus in its blood. The virus lives in the mosquito and is transmitted to a new host in the mosquito's saliva when the insect bites a person or animal.

Humans and horses are accidental hosts for WNV. Human-to-human or horse-to-human transmission does not occur. Virus transmission is most frequent from May to October when mosquitoes are most abundant.



Most people who are infected with WNV have no symptoms. However, of those who become ill, symptoms can include fever, headache, nausea, body aches, mild skin rash, or swollen lymph nodes. In a few cases, the disease will progress to encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). The incubation period between the mosquito bite and the onset of illness, ranges from 5-15 days in humans. It is estimated the 1 in 150 people who are infected with WNV will require hospitalization. The elderly are particularly susceptible to illness caused by WNV. There is no specific treatment for infection with WNV. Currently no vaccine for humans is available.

An infected mosquito can bite any animal, and many animals will become infected, but only a few species exhibit disease. Disease is seen in a several species of birds, in horses, and man. Cats, dogs, bats, chipmunks, skunks, squirrels, and domestic rabbits have been shown to be infected without exhibiting disease symptoms.

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## West Nile Virus Continued...

Infection has been reported in more than 70 bird species, most of which do not appear ill. WNV infection can cause serious illness and death in many avian species including e.g., crows, jays, ravens, and magpies. Birds of prey are also very susceptible.



Horses are also susceptible to WNV. An equine WNV vaccine has recently became available.

To minimize exposure to mosquitoes and the microbes they may carry:

- Avoid outside activity at dawn and dusk during the mosquito season (May to October). This is particularly important for the elderly and small children.
- Wear protective clothing (long pants and long sleeves) and apply insect repellent (DEET) when outside. Do not use repellents on infants.
- Make sure that doors and windows have tight-fitting screens. Repair and replace screens that have tears or holes in them.
- Drain all standing or stagnant water in buckets, barrels, toys, tire swings, etc.
- Stock permanent ponds with fish that eat mosquito larvae.
- Make sure roof gutters drain properly. Clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall.
- Properly maintain swimming pools and spas with proper filtration and chlorination levels.
- Avoid water runoff when watering lawns and outdoor plants.

If you find a dead bird, particularly a crow, please call 1-877-WNV-BIRD promptly. Do not touch the bird with bare hands.

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## Message from your City Safety Officer Continued.....

(Continued from page 1) participation in the peer observation process.

The Behavioral Leadership Team, dominated by hourly employees, is led by the plant safety manager and safety champion, an hourly worker selected by the team. The team continues to meet bi-weekly to communicate lessons learned, share successes, and plan future behavioral safety efforts. At first, the "Champ" took a lot of ribbing from his co-workers as he took on this new role. He found his own work practices were watched closely by others, many hoping to "catch" him working at-risk. Today, he finds people more willing to come to him to discuss safety concerns or ideas.

One of the most rewarding side benefits of this employee participative safety effort is improved union-management relations. This 50+ year-old facility experienced some frosty periods including a strike/lock-out. The local union president has been a strong advocate for participation in the peer observation process as has the plant manager. In fact, they both signed formal announcement when peer observation and coaching training began stating their support of the process and their commitment to keeping it voluntary and non-punitive.

From 17 recordable injuries in 2000, the facility of approximately 200 has successfully managed that number to 10 in 2001 and to 7 in 2002. Additionally, the plant just celebrated 1,000,000 hours without a day-away-from-work injury. While these numbers are impressive, they only tell the outcome of the story. The safety process itself is being measured in new and progressive ways. These measures are upstream

indicators of the safety process and are largely in the control of employees. All employees participate in a quarterly incentive program based on these measures.

"One of the most rewarding side benefits of this employee participative safety effort is improved union-management relations."

#### 2002-03 Plant Safety Measures

- Safety meetings/training per employee
- Safety inspections/audits/drills
- Behavioral observations
- Safety concerns identified
- Incidents reported/investigated
- Behavioral process participation
- Incident-to-Injury ratio
- DO IT processes completed
- Safety work orders completed
- "10 Most Wanted" (equipment repairs completion rate

Will this story have a happy ending? Have these employees achieved Utopia in northeastern Missouri? Are they resting on their laurels? Certainly not. But they are on the path of continuous improvement "Steering Toward an Injury-Free Workplace" and they understand it is a journey not a destination.



If your interested in contributing an article for our monthly Safety newsletter, please contact: **The City Safety Office** extension 6552.

When submitting an article of safety interest, all we ask is that you provide your source of information so we can verify the information before we distribute and post it on the City Safety website.

We are always open to new ideas and we look forward to hearing from you.

—Thank you!

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## **July 2004**

### Citywide Employee Safety Training Calendar

(Scheduled Classes as of June 22, 2004)

Dates	Course	Time's)	Location
July 1	Forklift (Initial) (4 hrs)	7:30 am – 11:30 am	Long Beach Energy/EDC 2929 E. Willow Street, Classroom
July 1	Forklift (Refresher) (4 hrs)	12:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Long Beach Energy/EDC 2929 E. Willow Street, Classroom
July 1	Aerial Man Lift (Initial/Refresher)	7:30 am – 11:30 am	PW, San Francisco Yard 1601 San Francisco Avenue, Training Room NOTE: For PW employees
July 2	Aerial Man Lift (Refresher)	7:30 am – 11:30 am	Long Beach Energy/EDC 2929 E. Willow Street, Classroom NOTE: For LBE/Fleet Services Employees
July 6	Aerial Man Lift (Refresher)	7:30 am – 11:30 am	Long Beach Energy/EDC 2929 E. Willow Street, Classroom NOTE: For LBE/Fleet Services Employees
July 14	Life Safety (Module 5)	AM Session: 8:00 am – 12:00 pm PM Session: 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Long Beach Energy/EDC 2929 E. Willow Street, EDC Classroom NOTE: For LBE/Fleet Services Employees
July 14	AED/CPR (Module 1)	AM Session: 8:00 am – 12:00 pm PM Session: 12:30 pm – 4:30 pm	American Red Cross 3150 E. 29th Street, Classroom 2 NOTE: Parking is available in the back lot.
July 15	Ergonomics Office Training	10:00 am – 11:30 am	Main Library 101 Pacific Avenue, lower level, Auditorium
July 15	Ergonomics Office Training	1:00 pm – 2:30 pm	Long Beach Energy, EDC 2929 E. Willow Street, EDC Classroom NOTE: Park at ESB or off-street parking
July 19	Weapons of Mass Destruction (Module 6)	1:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Main Library 101 Pacific Avenue, Meeting Room 1
July 20	Incident Investigation Training (SCAT)	10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Main Library 101 Pacific Avenue, Meeting Room, lower level
July 21	Fire Extinguisher Training	AM Session: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm PM Session: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	PW, Long Beach Maintenance Yard 3150 St. Louis Ave. Conference Room and Fire Pit
July 21	Chain Saw Training (4 hrs)	12:00 pm – 4:00 pm	PRM, Tree Farm 7550 E. Spring Street, Conference Room NOTE: For PRM employees
July 23	Hazardous Communications	10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Long Beach Energy/EDC 2929 E. Willow Street, Classroom
July 28	HazMat Bio-Terrorism Refresher	7:00 am – 10:00 am	Long Beach Energy/EDC 2929 E. Willow Street, Classroom NOTE: For PW (Refuse) Employees
TBD	Acetylene/Compressed Gas Training (8 hrs)	TBD	TBD NOTE: For Water Employees



- NOTE: Course dates and time are subject to change without notice.
   Please be advised that HR will request a JV charge point from departments who have employees signed up for training and do not show up for the class.
- If you have any questions, please contact May Jong, Risk Management @ may jong@longbeach.gov

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### Office Ergonomics Quiz

How much do you know about office ergonomics? Try these 10 questions & find out.

- **1:** How should the mouse be positioned with respect to the keyboard?
  - A. On the desk above the keyboard.
  - B. On the wrist rest.
  - C. Near the keyboard at the same height of slightly above the keyboard.
  - D. As close to the monitor as possible.
- 2: How should the monitor be placed if the lower lens of a bifocal is used to view the screen?
  - A. 30 inches away with the top of the screen at eye level.
  - B. 20 inches away with the middle of the screen at eye level.
  - C. 20 inches away or less with the top of the screen about 30 degrees down from eye level.
- **3:** If you are injured on the job, what should you do?
  - A. Request and complete an incident report form from your supervisor
  - B. Fill out an employee right to know training form
  - C. Request a leave of absence
- **4:** True or false: The keyboard should be approximately at your elbow height when seated.
  - A. True
  - B. False

- **5:** The chair should be adjusted to at least provide support to what part of the back.
  - A. The shoulder blades
  - B. The lumbar region
  - C. The middle of the back
- **6:** True or false: People who work in offices don't have to worry about workplace health and safety.
  - A. True
  - B. False
- **7:** Which of the following activities involve repetitive motion?
  - A. Typing on a keyboard
  - B. Filing
  - C. Writing
  - D. Scanning
  - E. Using a mouse to draw pictures
  - F. All of the above
- **8:** True or false: If no pain is noticed while doing repetitive task than you do not have to worry about cumulative trauma.
  - C. True
  - D. False
- **9:** If you have a question about health and safety at work, you can talk to:
  - A. Your health and safety representative
  - B. Your supervisor
  - C. A union representative
  - D. A health and safety professional
  - E. Any of the above

<sup>\*\*</sup>Answers will be listed in next months issue of Safety Simply Stated!